

REMARKS

Claim Status

Claims 1 and 10-12 are pending in the present application. No additional claims fee is believed to be due.

Claims 1 and 12 have been amended to more specifically point out the invention. Support for the amendments may be found at, for example, Specification, page 23, lines 21 to 25.

It is believed these changes do not involve any introduction of new matter. Consequently, entry of these changes is believed to be in order and is respectfully requested.

Rejection Under 35 USC §103(a) Over Hanser in view of Tsuchiya

Claims 1 and 10-12 have been rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Hanser (WO 98/42286 A1) in view of Tsuchiya (JP 04-120138A). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

This rejection is traversed for two reasons. First, Hanser (WO 98/42286 A1) does not establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness because it does not teach or suggest all of the claim limitations of Claims 1 and 10-12.

Amended claim 1 is limited to an absorbent article comprising an oil-based skin care composition on the body surface of the article. The absorbent article has outwardly-extending flaps comprising adhesives on the garment surface of the flaps to secure the flaps to the wearer's undergarment. The flaps are folded over the body surface of the absorbent article and a barrier sheet treated with selected components covers the flap adhesive before use of the absorbent article.

The configuration of the absorbent articles of the present invention provides an efficient way in protecting flap adhesive from oil-based skin care composition applied on the body surface of the article. Particularly, when the flaps of the absorbent article are folded over the body surface of the article and the article is folded for shipment and sale, etc (in the configuration shown in Fig. 9), the oil-based skin care composition faces the

flap adhesive, however , since the flap adhesive is covered by a barrier sheet treated with the specified components, the migration of the oil-based skin care composition through the barrier sheet is reduced or prevented, thus, the degradation of the flap adhesive by contacting with the oil-based skin care composition is avoided.

Hanser describes an absorbent article comprising a protective cover releasably attached on the topsheet upper surface. The protective cover of Hanser is to protect the lotion treated topsheet from contamination. (Page 2, lines 23-27). In other words, Hanser does not recognize the problem associated with the undesirable migration of oil-based skin care composition, such as the degradation of adhesives by the lotion composition. Further, Hanser does not describe or suggest a specific embodiment of an absorbent article having flaps folded over the body surface of the article and a barrier sheet that covers the flap adhesives.

Since Hanser addresses a different problem from the present invention, and since Hanser does not describe or suggest the distinctive features of the present invention, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of the claims.

Conclusion

This response represents an earnest effort to place the present application in proper form and to distinguish the invention as claimed from the applied references. In view of the foregoing, entry of the amendments presented herein, reconsideration of this application, and allowance of the pending claims are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

THE PROCTER & GAMBLE COMPANY

_____/AEV/
Andrés E. Velarde
Registration No. 68,653
(513) 983-7923

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Customer No. 27752